

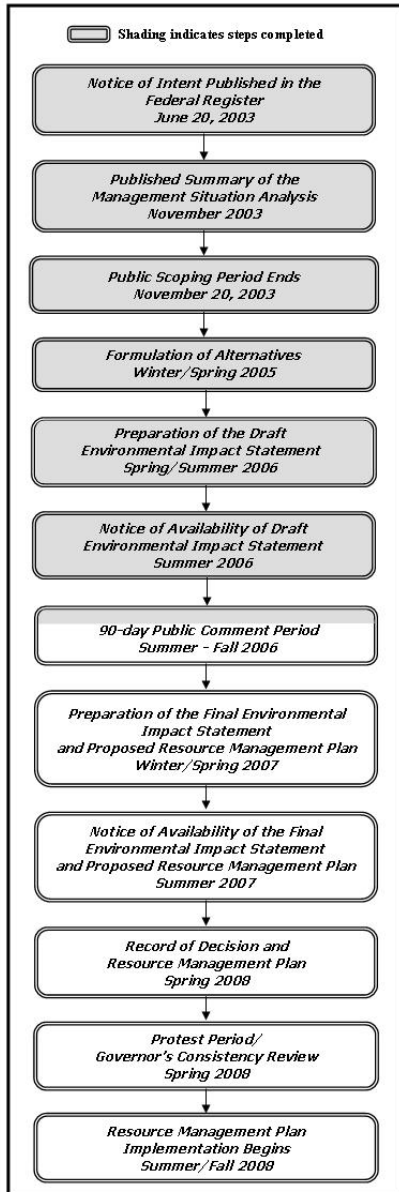


Casper Resource Management Plan Revision Newsletter

2987 Prospector Drive, Casper, WY 82604-2968
(307) 261-7600 <http://www.blm.gov/rmp/casper/>

July 2006

Where do we go from here?



Letter from the Field Manager

Dear Friends,

Thanks for your continued participation in the Casper Resource Management Plan (RMP) revision process. This is the third newsletter in a series designed to provide you with information on what is happening in the Casper RMP revision process.

The Draft Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (RMP/EIS) will be available July 21, 2006, starting the 90-day public comment period. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) prepared this document in cooperation with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, National Park Service, State of Wyoming, county governments, and conservation districts located in the planning area.

The Draft RMP/EIS describes and analyzes five alternatives for future management of public lands and resources administered by the BLM. While a preferred alternative is identified, selection of the final plan has not been made. The final decision will be made only after the comments received from the public on the Draft RMP/EIS are considered.

Your review and comment on the content of this document are critical to the success of this planning effort. There are three distinct ways for you to comment during the comment period: 1) submit comments using the Casper RMP revision website <http://www.blm.gov/rmp/casper/>, 2) attend the public meetings/hearings (schedule on page 3), or 3) submit written comments directly to the BLM Casper Field Office. I encourage you to review the document, attend the public meetings/hearings, and submit your comments.

Sincerely,

Jim Murkin, Casper Field Office Manager
Bureau of Land Management
Casper Field Office

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Commonly Used Acronyms

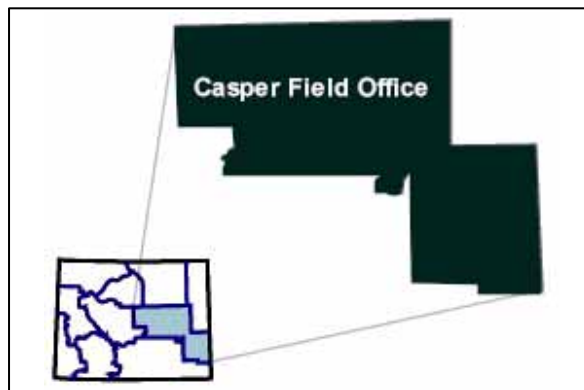
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
NOI	Notice of Intent
RMP	Resource Management Plan
ROD	Record of Decision

Purpose and Need for the Resource Management Plan Revision



The BLM Casper Field Office planning area is located in east-central Wyoming and includes approximately 8.5 million acres of land in most of Natrona County, and all of Converse, Goshen, and Platte counties. Within the Casper planning area, the BLM administers approximately 1.4 million acres of public surface and 4.7 million acres of federal mineral estate.

The purpose for revising the existing 1985 Platte River RMP (now the Casper RMP) is to address emerging resource issues, new information, and changing laws. Since 1985, the existing plan has served as the framework for managing the BLM-administered lands in the planning area; however, the existing plan has undergone more than 50 maintenance actions including updates and amendments, and is in need of revision. In the 20 years since the Record of Decision (ROD) was signed in July 1985 for the existing plan, new data have become available, new policies established, and old policies revised.



**BLM Casper Planning Area
Within the State of Wyoming**

Reminder – You can submit your comments on the Draft RMP/EIS using the Casper RMP revision website. See Page 4 for tips on commenting.

<http://www.blm.gov/rmp/casper/>

Overview of the Resource Management Plan Alternatives

Through a series of workshops and meetings with other federal, state, and local agencies who accepted cooperating agency status on the RMP revision, we developed five alternatives to be considered in the Casper RMP revision. Following is an overview of each alternative.

Alternative A (No Action Alternative)

Continues the existing management and uses of public lands and resources at present projected levels.

Alternative B

Emphasizes conservation of natural and heritage resources to a greater extent than Alternative A.

Alternative C

Provides natural resource management and conservation similar to that under Alternative A. Protection and conservation of natural and heritage resources are in a more balanced manner and allow for acceptable levels of resource development.

Alternative D

Emphasizes resource development. Conservation of natural and heritage resources would be provided, but major emphasis is on resource development.

Alternative E (Preferred Alternative)

Allows for resource use with more emphasis on protection of the natural and heritage resources than alternatives A, C, or D. Alternative E consists of a combination of management actions from alternatives A through D.

The Draft RMP/EIS analyzes the impacts of the five alternatives for the planning area, including the No Action Alternative and agency Preferred Alternative. The No Action Alternative reflects current management (the existing plan with updated policy changes). As required by BLM's planning guidance, the agency Preferred Alternative is presented in the Draft RMP/EIS for comparison with the other alternatives. While it is called the Preferred Alternative, election of the final plan will be made only after the comments received from the public on the Draft RMP/EIS are considered.

If you wish to submit comments, we request that you make them as specific as possible. Comments will be more helpful if they include suggested changes, sources or methodologies, and reference a section or page number. Comments that contain only opinions or preferences will be considered and included as part of the decision-making process, but will not receive a formal response from the BLM.

Timeline: Where We Are and Where We Are Going

- **Publish the Draft RMP/EIS.** The Draft RMP/EIS will be available on July 21, 2006.
- **90-Day Public Comment Period.** The Draft RMP/EIS process provides 90 days for public comment, during which time four public meetings/hearings are scheduled in Wheatland, Torrington, Douglas, and Casper, Wyoming. The 90-day public comment period ends October 19, 2006.
- **Prepare and Publish Final EIS.** The BLM will prepare the Final EIS, considering the public and agency comments that are submitted during the 90-day comment period. The Final EIS/Proposed RMP is scheduled for release in summer 2007.
- **30-Day Protest Period.** The protest period allows the public an opportunity to protest the BLM's proposed land use plan decision.
- **60-Day Governor's Consistency Review.** The Governor will have 60 days to review the proposed plan, identify inconsistencies between the proposed plan and state programs, and provide written recommendations to the BLM State Director.
- **Prepare Record of Decision.** Once any protest issues are resolved and the Governor's consistency review is complete, the State Director approves the EIS by signing the Record of Decision (ROD), scheduled for late 2007.



How Can You Participate in the Decision Making Process?

The Draft RMP/EIS will be released on July 21, 2006 and will be available for your review on the Casper RMP revision website at <http://www.blm.gov/rmp/casper/> and at the following libraries:

- Library of Congress
- University of Wyoming Library
- Converse County Public Library
- Goshen County Public Library
- Natrona County Public Library
- Casper College Library
- Eastern Wyoming College Library
- Platte County Public Library

We want to hear from you! Although your comments are welcome anytime during the RMP revision process, there are three ways to comment during the 90-day comment period:

1. Submit comments using the Casper RMP revision website <http://www.blm.gov/rmp/casper/>.
2. Attend the public meetings/hearings (see schedule below).
3. Submit written comments directly to the BLM Casper Field Office at:

Casper RMP Revision
2987 Prospector Drive
Casper, Wyoming 82604-2968
or fax to: (307) 261-7587

Draft RMP/EIS Comment Deadline. Electronic comments must be submitted to the BLM by October 19, 2006. Mailed comments must be postmarked by October 19, 2006.

Public Meetings/Hearings Schedule

The BLM staff will be available at the meetings/hearings to explain the process and answer questions. Several methods will be available for you to submit your comments. The meetings/hearings will be conducted to combine an open house format and formal public hearing format. This will allow for comments to be made publicly and privately. People may enter and leave at their convenience at any time during the scheduled hours.

Location	Date	Address	Time
Wheatland, Wyoming	August 28, 2006	Platte County Library 904 9 th Street	3:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Torrington, Wyoming	August 29, 2006	Eastern Wyoming College Community Training Center Building 3200 West C Street	3:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Douglas, Wyoming	August 30, 2006	Converse County Courthouse Sheriff's Office Community Room 107 North 5 th Street	3:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Casper, Wyoming	August 31, 2006	BLM Casper Field Office 2987 Prospector Drive	3:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How do I get a copy of the Draft RMP/EIS?

A: The Draft RMP/EIS will be released on July 21, 2006 and will be available for your review on the BLM web site <http://www.blm.gov/rmp/casper/> and at select libraries listed on page 3. CDs and hard copies are also available at the Casper Field Office. Call (307) 261-7600 for more information.

Q: How can I submit comments?

A: There are three ways for you to submit comments during the 90-day public comment period:

1. The Casper RMP revision website <http://www.blm.gov/rmp/casper/>.
2. Attend the public meetings/hearings (see page 3).
3. Submit written comments directly to the BLM Casper Field Office via U.S. Postal Service mail (see page 3).

Q: What is the most efficient way to submit comments?

A: We prefer you submit comments on the Casper RMP revision website at <http://www.blm.gov/rmp/casper/>.

Q: How do I write an effective comment?

A: There are several details that make an effective comment:

1. Be familiar with the document, including the purpose and need for the document.
2. Be as specific as possible, referencing page numbers and paragraphs in the document.
3. Focus comments on particular issues or resources and back up your statement with facts and references.

Q: When and where will the public meetings/hearings be held?

A: There are four public meetings/hearings scheduled during the 90-day comment period (refer to page 3):

- Monday, August 28, 2006 3 p.m. – 8 p.m.
Platte County Library - Wheatland, Wyoming
- Tuesday, August 29, 2006 3 p.m. – 8 p.m.
Eastern Wyoming College - Torrington, Wyoming
- Wednesday, August 30, 2006 3 p.m. – 8 p.m.
Converse County Courthouse - Douglas, Wyoming
- Thursday, August 31, 2006 3 p.m. – 8 p.m.
BLM Casper Field Office – Casper, Wyoming

Q: Is the BLM Preferred Alternative another way of saying that the decision has already been made and public input will have no effect?

A: No, your review and comment on the content of this document are critical to the success of this planning effort. The Preferred Alternative is presented, as required by BLM planning guidance, for comparison with the other alternatives. It also allows BLM and its partners to focus on whether the RMP revision is headed in the right direction. This should guide the public in putting their efforts into comments where they can be most effective. The final decision will be made only after the comments received on the Draft RMP/EIS are considered.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
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Casper, Wyoming 82604-2968